

ESSENTIALS OF NEUROSURGERY FOR STUDENTS AND PRACTITIONERS—Sean Mullan, M.D., Associate Professor of Neurosurgery, The University of Chicago. Springer Publishing Company, Inc., 44 East 23rd St., New York 10, N. Y., 1961. 273 pages, \$6.75.

Doctor Mullan calls his monograph "The Essentials of Neurosurgery." Almost as an afterthought, though, and in small type we see "For Students and Practitioners." This title in itself opens up broad semantic potential and, taken at its face value, the author must concede that the adjective "abridged" might well have been appended for, compact as it is, who would not agree that in 273 pages even a gifted Irishman would have difficulty in relating all of neurosurgery that was "essential" to otherwise unqualified "students and practitioners."

Taken as an abridged and pleasantly readable summary of the present status of neurological surgery which, as a scientific tome is adequate to its intent, the book will satisfy without doubt a demand for a digest of information by undergraduate and a certain number of graduate students of medicine, including for one reason or another, a number of men who are actively in the practice of medicine and who want to have a modicum of reasonably reliable information, pleasantly assembled, to afford them a favorable position as they see individuals with potential problems demanding the care of a neurological surgeon.

In condensing the material available to him, there has been of necessity an occasional license with respect to fact, theories or moot subjects, these being put forth without qualification as having been reliably established. If the limitations which are unavoidable are acknowledged, these relatively minor divergences from hard core science will probably do no harm. The book is apparently not intended as a text, or even as an intensive review. Its reader can consider himself, though, pleasantly informed.

In addition to its admirable readability, there is an attractive array of simple line drawings which are valuably supplementary when words do not easily come or would require such numbers as to interrupt the train of narrative. The few x-ray films and the illustrations of microscopic pathology included are well enough reproduced.

For those who desire a pleasant, if not a profound refresher in neurosurgery, the book is recommended.

EDWIN B. BOLDREY, M.D.

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SYMPTOM DIAGNOSIS—Fifth Edition—Wallace Mason Yater, A.B., M.D., M.S. (in Med.), F.A.C.P., Director, Yater Clinic, Washington, D. C. Formerly Professor of Medicine and Director of the Department of Medicine, Georgetown University School of Medicine; and William Francis Oliver, B.S., M.D., F.A.C.P., Assistant Clinical Professor of Medicine, University of Southern California School of Medicine; Consultant, Santa Barbara General Hospital. Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 32 W. 32nd St., New York 1, N. Y. 1035 pages, \$15.00.

The role of symptoms in disease is complex. They are, of course, the cause of the patient coming to the physician, but they are rarely found as single disease tip-offs. As a rule, it is the combination or the development of symptoms which leads to the diagnosis in a given case.

As symptoms are presented to or discovered by the doctor, he will automatically have a flashback of some of the diseases in which they occur. When he reviews the differential diagnosis in the textbook he may very likely find that his memory is inadequate. He may wish that he had another type of reference—ready yet encompassing—to consult while the patient is still in the office. This is what the authors have attempted to supply. Their purpose is three fold: (1) To aid the physician in diagnosis by allowing him to reduce the number of diagnostic possibilities to a relatively small list;

(2) to prevent oversight of important considerations; (3) to make him more observant of the characteristics of the symptoms of disease. Practicability is the objective; conciseness, arrangement and authenticity the main features.

The fifth edition has been expanded to over 1,000 pages and extensively rewritten. The contents are divided into general symptoms and regional symptoms (of some 21 regions of the body). There are 18 tables of differential diagnoses, two appendices which list syndromes and diseases associated with men's names, and an adequate index.

This volume is designed for quick reference rather than for study. Today it is a useful tool. Tomorrow or a few tomorrows removed, a good part of it may be superseded by the computer. If we are to believe the prophets of the coming computer revolution, symptom diagnosis will soon be analyzed much better by the machine than by the book. For the present, however, Dr. Yater and Dr. Oliver have performed a great task, one that should make even the computer scientists happy because of the wealth of symptoms with which they are furnished.

EDGAR WAYBURN, M.D.

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SOMATIC TREATMENTS IN PSYCHIATRY—Lothar B. Kallnowsky, M.D.-Paul H. Hoch, M.D. Grune & Stratton, Inc., 381 Park Avenue South, New York 16, N. Y., 1961. 413 pages.

This revised edition of a standard work in psychiatry continues to be the best book regarding somatic treatment in psychiatry. It is easily read, well presented and extensive. It has an excellent bibliography and a good index. The chapters are cohesive and it is as current as a book can be particularly in the area of pharmacotherapy. This book should be a standard reference work for all psychiatrists and all libraries concerned with resident training.

WAYNE E. JACOBSON, M.D.

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FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CONGENITAL MALFORMATIONS—Papers and Discussions Presented at the First International Conference on Congenital Malformations, London, England, July 18-22, 1960. Compiled and Edited for The International Medical Congress, Ltd. J. B. Lippincott Company, East Washington Square, Philadelphia 5, Pa., 1962. 314 pages, \$7.50.

As the title implies, this book is a compilation of the papers and discussions of a conference held in London in July, 1960, on Congenital Malformations. The conference was attended by many of the current world authorities in the field, and the subjects discussed covered many but not all aspects of the problem including incidence, etiology, mechanisms, normal development and research problems for the future.

In ten pages George W. Corner of the Rockefeller Institute rather nicely summarizes some major aspects of the problem and points to the great need for research in developmental biology. He correctly states the importance of the genes which determine the infinite detail of bodily structure but also acknowledges the many other areas of research which are necessary to obtain a complete understanding of the problem.

Little new information is contained in the formal presentations of the conference. During the discussion periods that followed the formal presentations, many of the participants presented unpublished observations and also raised questions that are very pertinent to investigators in the field.

The book appears to be of little practical value to practicing clinicians; however, it is of definite value to individuals engaged in many spheres impinging upon the problem of Congenital Malformations.

FORREST H. ADAMS, M.D.